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March 16, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: CS Division and Staff Chiefs

SUBJECT : CS Historical Program

1. I am seriously concerned that the CS historical program is behind the schedule set for the writing of CS and other CIA directorate histories. With the 31 December 1971 deadline for the catching-up phase (1945-1965) approaching, it is evident that, measured by progress over the past few months, some components will not complete projected histories by that date. Some have no writers assigned to the program and others are making a minimal effort with only one or two full-time or part-time writers engaged. By and large, work on division or staff and major station histories has not been initiated. Even with an accelerated effort it appears that by the end of the year a substantial number of CS histories will not have been written.

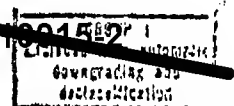
2. I request all division and staff chiefs to give the program priority and personal attention in the interest of getting the job done in an acceptable manner. I urge consideration of the following items:

a. Persons with known writing and research competence should be assigned to compile the histories. (Grade level is not necessarily a criterion for writing competence.) Superficial and inadequate drafts represent a waste of time and money.

b. Full-time rather than part-time writers should be assigned. In very few instances have part-time writers been able to complete histories or make appreciable progress in their preparation.

c. Personnel approaching retirement often combine personal knowledge and writing ability but historical writer assignments should not be confined to them. Where possible, competent mid-career officers should be designated between other assignments for periods which enable them to complete a unit of history in an acceptable manner.

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d. Employment of annuitant under contract to write histories is counter to over-all Agency retirement policies. In only a few special cases will consideration be given to exceptions.

e. Persons who have demonstrated competence and interest in historical writing and research should be encouraged and provided incentives (including promotion, if earned) to continue in the program.

f. In proceeding with the catching-up phase of the program, major station histories should be given priority over those of less significance.

g. Component management should promptly review, edit, and release draft histories. Some have been delayed for unduly long periods. With the approaching deadline, further delays of this sort seriously reduce our ability to finish the program on schedule.

3. I request that by 29 March each component chief review the status of his historical program and advise me of prospects of meeting the 31 December 1971 deadline. Where programs are obviously behind schedule, please advise what steps are being taken for a stronger and more concerted effort in the time remaining.

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Acting Deputy Director for Plans

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